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Air Resources Board

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Arnold Schwarzenegger
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Interested Community Members:

As part of its efforts to promote a comprehensive railyard emissions reduction program, the Air Resources Board (ARB) staff, in cooperation with representatives from BNSF Railways (BNSF), will conduct a public meeting to discuss BNSF's draft mitigation plan to reduce diesel particulate matter (PM) emissions at the BNSF Barstow railyard. BNSF prepared the initial draft mitigation plan pursuant to a 2005 Agreement between ARB, BNSF, and Union Pacific Railroad (UP).

The date, time, and location for the BNSF Barstow draft railyard mitigation plan public meeting are provided below:

<u>Date/Time:</u>	<u>Location:</u>	<u>Railyard Covered:</u>
Tuesday, February 24, 2009 6:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.	City of Barstow Council Chambers 220 E. Mountain View Street Barstow, California 92311	BNSF Barstow

The draft mitigation plan for the BNSF Barstow railyard can be found on the ARB's railyard website: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/railyard/hra/hra.htm>. This meeting notice is available at: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/railyard/community/community.htm>.

Public comments on the BNSF Barstow railyard draft mitigation plan are encouraged prior to, and up to 30 days after, the February 24, 2009 public meeting. If you are a person with limited English, there will be Spanish interpreter services available at the meeting.

As background, ARB identified particulate matter from diesel exhaust (diesel PM) as a toxic air contaminant in 1998. Statewide diesel PM accounts for about 70 percent of the estimated potential ambient air toxics cancer risk. Some residential areas are in close proximity to significant sources of diesel PM such as ports, railyards, and freeways. In those areas, increases in cancer risk are often significant and can, in a few cases, equal or exceed the regional background levels. The estimated regional background risk level for the broader Mojave Desert Air Basin is estimated to be about 120 in a million caused by diesel PM only in 2000.

The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption. For a list of simple ways you can reduce demand and cut your energy costs, see our website: <http://www.arb.ca.gov>.

California Environmental Protection Agency

In April 2008, ARB staff released the health risk assessment (HRA) for the BNSF Barstow railyard. An HRA is a tool that is used to evaluate the potential for a chemical to cause cancer or other illness. A risk assessment uses mathematical models to estimate the theoretical maximum health impacts from exposure to certain concentrations or levels of toxic air pollutants released from a facility or found in the air. The HRA also provides the necessary information to design and implement an effective mitigation plan for each railyard. In the case of the BNSF Barstow railyard, ARB staff estimated that in 2005 the maximum individual cancer risk was about 450 in a million excess cancer risks for specific locations near the railyards. In addition, in 2005 a population of about 22,000 was exposed to about ten in a million excess cancer risk in a number of areas surrounding the railyard.

In a separate but complementary effort, ARB staff has developed a technical assessment of potential options that could potentially accelerate and further reduce diesel PM and oxides of nitrogen emissions generated from locomotives operating regionally, and other locomotive and nonlocomotive emission sources operating within railyards. ARB staff will discuss the status of this effort at the meeting.

ARB and BNSF will make every effort to include all interested parties in the meeting notification process. We recognize that numerous individuals and organizations conduct additional outreach efforts in their specific community. To assist with these efforts, we would like to encourage those individuals and organizations to photocopy and distribute this public meeting notice. Alternatively, you may contact Ms. Maria Yanez-Forgash, with Arellano Associates, to add anyone to the project database and to receive additional copies of meeting flyers. Ms. Yanez-Forgash may be reached at (909) 627-2974.

If you have questions about the upcoming meeting, please call Mr. Harold Holmes, Manager, Engineering Evaluation Section, at (916) 324-8029 or e-mail hholmes@arb.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Robert D. Fletcher, Chief
Stationary Source Division

cc: Mr. Harold Holmes, Manager
Engineering Evaluation Section